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ABSTRACT

This booklet explains the goals of Easter Schools, part of England's National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. Easter Schools should be planned to cover four half-days and include four literacy and four mathematics lessons each covering the equivalent of at least an hour. The booklet addresses the following issues: why funding has been made available for Easter Schools; whether the lessons will be identical to school lessons; how to motivate children to attend Easter Schools; and how to ensure children will improve their literacy and mathematics skills. It provides models of mathematics lessons and lists key aspects of literacy that should be emphasized. In addition, the booklet lists National Literacy Strategy materials that will help the planning of the four literacy lessons. (PM)

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The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies

Guidance

Curriculum & Standards

Easter School Guidance

Easter School Organisers

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How will Easter Schools be organised?

Easter Schools are to be held during the spring term 2003 and can be held at any time from February half-term until the end of the Easter holidays. You could plan to hold them at weekends, during the February half-term or in the Easter holidays.

Easter Schools should be planned to cover four half-days and include four literacy and four mathematics lessons each covering the equivalent of at least an hour.

Funding is available for two teachers and a group of at least 25 children at each Easter School. The children invited to attend should be those children who would benefit from additional support to enable them to achieve level 4 in English and mathematics by the time they leave primary school.

Funding could also cover the cost of employing teachers and teaching assistants to support the teachers in charge of the literacy and mathematics sessions.

£2000 is available to cover all staffing, venue, resources and preparation costs. For example:

4 half-days for 2 teachers @ £145.00 per day	£580.00
4 half-days for 2 teaching assistants @ £30.00 per day	£120.00
Venue costs	£450.00
2 days for preparation @ £145.00 per day	£290.00
Resources and other costs	£560.00
	£2000.00

Why is funding being made available to run Easter Schools?

Funding is provided to support the planning and delivery of at least four hours each of mathematics and literacy for children in Year 6 working at level 3. The aim of the initiative is to provide additional support to the targeted group of children to help them secure the basic skills in mathematics and literacy by the end of Year 6. Without the basic skills in mathematics and literacy, children will find it difficult to access the next steps in their education.

Will the sessions be the same as the lessons the children have attended at school?

It is important to ensure that each session is focused on aspects of literacy and mathematics that will help these children to progress in their understanding. However, the children are volunteering to come along for additional teaching during their holiday or free time. It is, therefore, important that the lessons have a different feel from their daily mathematics lessons and literacy hours.

How can I motivate the target group of children to attend?

- Contact parents and explain that the Easter School would provide a real opportunity for their children to improve their skills. Explain to parents that the sessions will be fun and supportive, and will take their children forward.
- Consider involving a local celebrity or sportsperson to come along to the start or end of the Easter School to motivate the children.
- Invite local press, radio or TV to cover the school, with the emphasis on children succeeding.
- Plan to include time each day to reflect on how each child has moved forward that day.
- Plan for certificates to be presented to congratulate children on their efforts.

How might I make the Easter School sessions different from daily literacy and mathematics lessons?

Explain to the children and parents before the school that the sessions will be different from their usual lessons in the following ways.

- The sessions are specially designed for them as a group to help them move forward.
- Children will get time to talk regularly with their teacher about any difficulties they may have.
- Teachers will spend time showing them exactly how to be successful in particular aspects of mathematics and literacy.

For mathematics sessions, plan a tutorial for the start of each lesson for a small group of children, focused on aspects of mathematics that the group is less confident about. Follow the tutorial with intense 15-minute sessions. Plan for each session to give the children a clear sense of being taught something specific that they could not do before, or to practise an aspect of

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mathematics. Focus upon demonstrating and modelling, followed by opportunities to record ideas and to practise what they have just been taught.

For literacy sessions, identify with the children in the tutorial at the beginning of the Easter School the key skills they need to improve. Follow the new Year 6 booster literacy lesson structures and join two 30-minute sessions together to form an hour's lesson. This will allow opportunities for focused guided reading to link into writing sessions on the same text type. Guided reading sessions include book introduction, strategy check, independent reading, return to the text, and response to text. Writing sessions include spelling challenges, sharing writing learning intentions, teacher demonstration of techniques, time for independent writing and, finally, time to share work and reflect on the effectiveness of the piece of writing.

Ensure the children keep a learning record throughout each day of what they have been taught in mathematics and literacy and what they have learned or can recall.

Expect children to share their learning records with one another, with their parents and with their teachers back in mathematics and literacy lessons.

The more opportunities they have for revisiting their learning records the more likely they are to retain these skills. It is important that the headteacher is aware of this group of pupils and the progress they are making during the spring and summer terms.

How can I ensure children improve their mathematical skills?

To improve children's mathematical skills, include the following activities as a part of your Easter School mathematics lessons.

Increase the speed at which children can recall important mathematical facts

Many of the children may not have a secure grasp and recall of multiplication tables and addition and subtraction facts. Hold recall challenges to see how many questions they can answer in a given time, with personal ladders of progress and new targets to reach. Children compete against themselves to answer as many questions as possible in the time set. Children could be asked to practise at home with an adult in the evening.

Improve children's ability to explain orally how they carry out a calculation

Ask who really understands how to carry out a particular calculation and ask them to record their explanation on a tape. Other children can listen to the recording and see if they can follow the explanation and carry out a similar calculation correctly.

Encourage children to use less formal methods of calculation

Show children how to use a number line, the grid method of multiplication or 'chunking' for division. Build on their ability to recall number facts so they can apply their methods of calculation with confidence and accuracy. Introduce word problems with easy calculations that gradually become more complex as children identify the operations they should use.

Improve calculator skills

Pose word problems for children to solve using a calculator. They will have to identify the operations they are going to use before working out the answers on the calculator and recording their calculations for others to check.

How can I ensure children improve their literacy skills?

To improve children's literacy skills, include the following activities as a part of your Easter School literacy lessons.

Reading

Improve children's understanding of how to refer to the text for evidence in comprehension tasks

Show children how to use skimming and scanning techniques by active use of highlighter pens to mark specific parts of the question and the text. These techniques should be specifically modelled by the teacher and then practised by the children.

Improve children's ability to explain why an author has chosen particular vocabulary

Use hot-seating techniques where the children ask the person playing the role of the author why particular words or phrases have been used in the text. Once the teacher has modelled this technique, a child can then take the part of the author and the other children pose questions. This technique supports children in 'getting inside the head of the author' and makes it easier for them to see how a writer chooses words or phrases to create particular effects on the reader.

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Improve children's ability to recognise the main ideas, make connections with a text and track key ideas

Help children to identify key ideas and themes in the whole text and in sections and paragraphs. Ask them to summarise key ideas in chapters and to pick out the dilemmas and resolution in stories or the main points of an argument. Also, help children to track back key ideas and, in particular, to see how something may be referred to in different ways at different points in the text (for example, a text about African animals may refer to elephants by name but also through the phrase 'large animals' and also as 'they').

Writing

Improve children's understanding of the features of different text types and draw on this understanding in their writing

When reading a range of different text types, construct checklists with the children of the key features of the text type. Make sure the checklists are written in child-friendly style so that children can remember them easily. Make explicit use of the checklists in teacher demonstrations of writing different text types, to model for children their application to writing. Encourage children to draft their own checklists prior to their independent writing. Allow a range of methods for prompts – pictures, diagrams, skeleton models.

Improve children's ability to vary sentence structures – including a variety of sentence opening styles, use of complex sentences and use of connectives

In shared reading highlight the writer's use of a variety of sentence structures, the use of complex sentences and connectives, and the effect these techniques have on the reader. Then in shared writing demonstrate the use of these techniques and illustrate how they can improve writing. Having demonstrated techniques, encourage children to draft sentence structure prompts for supporting their own writing. For example:

- start a sentence with an adverb
- link sentences with connectives other than *and* or *but*
- make use of the connective *if*.

Spelling

Improve children's ability to remember spelling rules and conventions

Take time to focus on specific spelling rules and conventions, to avoid common errors.

Use spelling challenges within the booster lessons which focus on key spelling errors, e.g. the suffix *ful*. Explain the rules and allow opportunities to apply them in dictation of similar words. Also demonstrate application of the rules in shared writing sessions.

How should I decide on key content for the mathematics and literacy lessons and how can I involve the children in these decisions?

Before the children attend the Easter School ensure that class teachers have reviewed progress against learning targets in mathematics, reading, writing and spelling. Engage the children in self-review before the Easter School by asking them to review the areas for improvement identified by their teacher and asking them to set down what they would like to be really good at in mathematics and literacy. What would they like to be able to do more quickly or more accurately, or what would they like to be able to do that they cannot do at present?

For mathematics, children might say that they would like to:

- know their nine-times table really well
- be able to multiply two numbers and get the right answer each time
- be able to use a calculator to help them work out really difficult calculations
- be able to solve word problems
- be able to subtract a large number from another large number.

For literacy, children might say that they would like to:

- be more confident, when they start writing, of the features of a particular type of writing, e.g. explanations
- be able to write sentences that are joined effectively by suitable connectives and use punctuation effectively
- be able to identify quickly evidence from the text when asked a question
- be able to explain why writers use particular techniques
- be able to remember how to spell tricky words.

Are there some key aspects of mathematics that I should teach that will help these children progress?

There are some key aspects of mathematics that you should plan to teach. These have been identified as those that the target borderline levels 3 to 4 children find particularly challenging.

You should plan to teach key aspects of mathematics that reflect the needs of the children attending the Easter School.

Select from the list below the key aspects of mathematics to teach to help these children progress.

A Calculations and number work

- instant recall of number facts
- ordering decimals
- mental calculations linking +, − and ×, ÷
- written methods of calculation including empty number lines
- knowing properties of numbers: prime, square, multiples, factors, etc.
- finding missing numbers to complete number statements, e.g. 35 + □ = 65, □ − 40 = 70
- finding percentages

B Shape and space

- transformation of shapes
- reading co-ordinates and plotting points in the four quadrants
- classifying triangles and quadrilaterals according to their properties
- measuring angles and identifying angles on straight lines, round a point and in a triangle
- reading scales
- using measures, converting between units
- calculating the perimeter and area of simple compound shapes

C Problem solving

- using a calculator to solve problems
- solving word problems and identifying which operation to use in a calculation
- interpreting tables and diagrams which contain information for problems
- explaining methods and using reasoning to solve problems

D Data handling

- interpreting bar and line graphs
- reading values from conversion graphs and charts
- understanding pie charts

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How might I organise and plan four one-hour mathematics sessions to ensure I cover the key aspects of mathematics?

Model for four one-hour mathematics lessons:

Staffing: 2 teachers and a teaching assistant
Number of children: 30

Mathematics session 1

1 hour

	15 mins	**15 mins**	**15 mins**	**15 mins**
Teacher 1	Tutorial (8 children)		Session on aspect of mathematics from A opposite (23 children)	Session on aspect of mathematics from B opposite (23 children)
Teacher 2	Session on aspect of mathematics from C opposite (22 children)	Session on aspect of mathematics from D opposite (22 children)	Tutorial (7 children)	

Mathematics session 2

1 hour

	15 mins	**15 mins**	**15 mins**	**15 mins**
Teacher 2	Tutorial (7 children)		Session on aspect of mathematics from A opposite (22 children)	Session on aspect of mathematics from B opposite (22 children)
Teacher 1	Session on aspect of mathematics from C opposite (23 children)	Session on aspect of mathematics from D opposite (23 children)	Tutorial (8 children)	

The teaching assistant will work in all the 15-minute sessions where the teacher is teaching a group of 22–23 children.

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Are there any National Numeracy Strategy materials that will help me to plan the four mathematics lessons?

The following National Numeracy Strategy materials will help you in planning your Easter School lessons.

Springboard 6 lessons

- 22 lessons covering many of the areas of mathematics which level 3 children find difficult
- 8 lessons on problem solving; the lessons may need to be adapted to ensure expectations match the target group.
  DfES reference: 0068/2003 (for 8 lessons on problem solving); 0778/2001 (for the original 22 lessons)

Note: All the materials listed can be downloaded from the standards website on www.standards.dfes.gov.uk

Unit Plans for the second half of the spring term and the summer term

- Sets of up to five lessons matched to the medium-term plans in the *Framework for teaching mathematics* (Reception to Year 6); the lessons will need to be selected and adapted to meet the 15-minute sessions and to ensure expectations match the targeted group.
  DfES reference: 0575/2002 (Year 6 spring term); 0020/2003 (Year 6 summer term).

Mathematical Vocabulary booklet

- Sets out the mathematical vocabulary for each year group throughout the primary phase. The booklet will help to identify the vocabulary that will need to be focused on in each of your four mathematics lessons.
  DfES reference: 0313/2000

Are there some key aspects of literacy that I should teach that will help these children progress?

There are some key aspects of literacy that you should plan to teach. These key aspects have been identified as those that the target borderline level 3 to 4 children find particularly challenging.

You should plan to teach key aspects of literacy that reflect the needs of the children attending the Easter School.

Select from the list below the key aspects of literacy to teach to help these children progress.

Reading

Comprehension: recognising main ideas, making connections within a text, tracking ideas through the text

Cohesion in a text: recognising the same ideas when expressed differently, e.g. moose, large animal, it

Inference: reading and reflecting on whole paragraph or section to infer meaning

Evidence: referring to the text to support their ideas

Vocabulary (words and phrases): understanding meaning within the context of the text

Writing

Text structure: using key features including bringing text to an effective ending

Punctuation: recognising sentence boundaries and using full stops and capital letters to mark them

Paragraphs: organising paragraphs by developing ideas and events in more detail rather than adding more of them

Sentence variety: using sentence variety and both subordination and coordination; using subordination more effectively to link ideas and events with connectives other than *so*, *then*, *when*, *if*

Word choice: using varied nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs to add clarity and precision, and avoid repetition

Spelling: knowing and using spelling rules, especially consonant doubling, medial vowels and long vowel phonemes; using knowledge of phonemes to support the spelling of long vowels in words of more than one syllable

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Are there any National Literacy Strategy materials that will help me to plan the four literacy lessons?

The new Year 6 literacy booster lessons are organised into three sections with key reading and writing targets identified and spelling challenges highlighted (DfES reference: 0052/2003).

Section One: Persuasive writing (6 lessons)

Reading targets:

- Know structures and grammatical features of a range of non-fiction text types, e.g. explanations, recounts

Writing targets:

- Keep writing lively to… persuade the reader through… providing persuasive reasons with examples…
- Use the range of different connectives to write coherently
- Spelling challenges

Section Two: Narrative writing (6 lessons)

Reading targets:

- Comment critically on the overall impact of poetry or prose with reference to, e.g., use of language and the development of themes

Writing targets:

- Use paragraphs to distinguish the structure of different texts
- Use the range of different types of connectives to write coherently
- Plan quickly and effectively, including the conclusion
- Spelling challenges

Section Three: Report writing (4 lessons)

Reading targets:

- Use secure understanding of the language features and structures of non-fiction text types

Writing targets:

- Use paragraphs to distinguish the structure of different texts
- Use a range of connecting words and phrases appropriately in different text types
- Plan quickly and effectively, including the conclusion
- Spelling challenges

Each section includes guided reading sessions, which can be delivered by the teacher or teaching assistant, followed by a shared writing session and an opportunity for independent writing. The lessons provide opportunities for children to plan, write and edit against agreed criteria. Each lesson also includes a short spelling challenge to consolidate spelling skills.

How should I plan and deliver the literacy lessons in my Easter School?

- The simplest planning route would be to choose one module from the new Year 6 literacy booster lesson book. Decide the area in which your children would most benefit from additional support – persuasive writing, narrative writing, report writing – and run your Easter School with this focus using the lessons from this section. The narrative writing section is particularly well suited to the Easter Schools as the planning, writing and revising of the story builds up over the lessons.
- Start the four Easter School lessons with lesson one, which provides an excellent introduction whatever the decided focus of your school. Then, having chosen a specific section – persuasive writing, narrative writing or report writing – run two half-hour sessions on reading and writing as a joined hour. In this way your Easter School will have a clear focus for teaching and learning.
  An example would be:

  Day 1 Year 6 literacy booster lessons 1 and 8

  Day 2 Year 6 literacy booster lessons 9 and 10

  Day 3 Year 6 literacy booster lessons 11 and 12

  Day 4 Year 6 literacy booster lessons 13 and 18

- Teachers or teaching assistants can deliver the guided reading sessions, which will allow you to run small group sessions. Shared writing needs to be demonstrated by your most effective teacher, and would possibly benefit from a whole-class approach followed by independent writing sessions with teacher and teaching assistant support alongside.
- Plan for time at the end of each hour lesson to evaluate learning and to allow children to document key strategies for success in an eye-catching format. At the end of the Easter School ensure that each child has a clear record of the strategies for success they can take back to school.
- Plan for time in school for the children to meet their teacher and headteacher to explain strategies for success and encourage class teachers to build in opportunities for this group to explain their new learning to peers.

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National Literacy Strategy materials to support the Easter Schools

Year 6 Literacy Booster Lessons
DfES reference: 0052/2003

The Year 5 Further Literacy Support lessons could be used to supplement the booster lessons. The FLS teacher's book was sent to all schools in October 2002
DfES reference: 0584/2002

FLS Resource Pack
DfES reference: 0359/2002

Year 6 planning exemplification 2002–3 and CD-Rom
DfES reference: 0752/2002

Grammar for Writing
DfES reference: 0107/2000

Spelling bank
DfES reference: 0086/2001

Note: All the materials listed above can be downloaded from the standards website on www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/literacy

Further information on the Key Stage 2 tests is available on the QCA website on www.qca.org.uk

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